

## Life Group Guidelines

- **Whenever possible, do not miss group meetings.**

Our purpose in is to nurture biblical community and intimacy in the group. If members are absent regularly or often, it severely hinders that process.
- **If at all possible, do not come late.**

The schedule will allow a few minutes for people to arrive, but if people arrive late consistently, it interferes with the schedule for the group meeting and detracts from the overall effectiveness of the group. Show respect for your fellow group members, come on time.
- **Be a respectful and effective listener.**

When someone else is sharing, listen carefully to what they have to say. It is important to them, so it should be important to you. Do not interrupt. People can quickly become frustrated and shutdown if they are not allowed to share without interruptions. If an individual is speaking for too long or sharing too often, the leader will handle it at an appropriate time and in an appropriate way.
- **Provide feedback with kindness and gentleness.**

Feedback from group members is an important part of Life Groups, but it needs to be done carefully. None of us has authority or justification for speaking to another group member harshly or for treating him or her unkindly. We are not here to judge one another but to speak into one another's lives words of affirmation and words of exhortation. Kindness and respect will foster a safe environment for individuals to grow and to find help and encouragement.
- **Keep those things shared in the group confidential.**

Confidentiality is essential if the group is to develop intimacy. If group members fear that the things being shared will be communicated with others outside of the group, they will stop sharing.
- **Develop additional guidelines specific to your group.**

The above are a few essential guidelines that are important to developing a healthy Life Group. If you determine that your group needs to add a few additional guidelines related to the particular needs of the group, please do so. These may be temporary just to get the group started or may be maintained for the life of the group. Be judicious, however, as too many restrictions will prevent group members from communicating freely and effectively.